

"Let's be very clear about what's going on here," Farr said. "It's an election year and gas prices are soaring - some posturing on the part of my colleagues is inevitable. But repealing the OCS natural gas drilling moratorium is not the way to solve our energy problems. Not only is it unsafe and unnecessary, since the vast majority of our recoverable natural gas reserves are outside the moratoria areas, it would be a death-knell to our critical coastal tourism industries. People don't go to visit the coasts of Florida or the coast of California to watch oil wells. The industry doesn't even want this!"\*

When the FY07 Interior Department Appropriations Bill came to the House floor yesterday, it contained a provision authored by Rep. John Peterson (PA-05) that would have repealed the Congressional moratorium on OCS drilling specifically for natural gas.

"I think we all know drilling for gas means drilling for oil. Disguising this proposal as anything else was proof that new oil drilling off our coasts is an idea the American people reject. Even Governor Schwarzenegger called the drilling provision 'a weak attempt to cater to oil interests in the face of high gasoline prices.' I am proud to be one of a bipartisan group of House members that stood up for our coastal resources and reasserted the drilling moratorium," said Farr.

Farr, who also argued against the drilling provision during Appropriations Committee consideration of the bill last week, supported an amendment by Reps. Lois Capps (CA-23) and Adam Putnam (FL-12) to remove the drilling provision and preserve the OCS moratorium. The Capps-Putnam Amendment passed by a vote of 217-203 late last night. The House went on to pass the underlying bill, which now goes to the Senate for their consideration.

\*American Petroleum Institute President Red Cavaney, in an interview with Oil & Gas Journal, "We are somewhat concerned about some gas-only leasing proposals that have been embraced by people who don't know how the industry works...[i]f it's limited to gas, how many companies will respond when they have other exploration choices around the world?"